

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-05 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 SS-15
SP-02 PA-01 ACDA-12 OMB-01 EB-08 TRSE-00 NSC-05
/072 W

-----031018 161219Z /10

R 141522Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5128
SECDEF WASHDC
INFO USMISSION USNATO
USNMR SHAPE
USCINCEUR

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E. O. 11652:NA
TAGS: UK MPOL MNUC MMOL
SUBJECT: GILMOUR'S REMARKS ON ERW DECISION

REF: LONDON 5616

1. SIR IAN GILMOUR (OPPOSITION SHADOW SECRETARY OF DEFENSE), SPEAKING IN WEST EDINBURGH ON 8 APRIL, REACTED TO THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION ON ERW BY INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING REMARKS IN A SPEECH GILMOUR WAS GIVING. WE QUOTE THE RELEVANT PORTION IN FULL AS GILMOUR USED UNUSUALLY STRONG WORDS IN ATTACKING THE DECISION. BEGIN TEXT: PRESIDENT CARTER'S BEHAVIOUR OVER THE SO-CALLED NEUTRON BOMB HAS BEEN A CLASSIC DEMONSTRATION OF HOW NOT TO CONDUCT INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMACY AND DISARMAMENT NEGOTIATIONS. THERE HAVE BEEN WEEKS OF LEAKS AND CONTRADICTIONS; AND AFTER AN ORGY OF WEAKNESS AND VACILLATION THE WRONG DECISION HAS FINALLY BEEN REACHED. MR. CARTER HAS BEEN SCARED OFF THE NEUTRON BOMB BY THE RUSSIAN PROPAGANDA BARRAGE. AND IT SEEMS

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THAT THE KREMLIN NOW HAS VIRTUALLY A RIGHT OF VETO ON THE WEAPONS THAT NATO IS ALLOWED TO DEPLOY. TO HAVE GIVEN RUSSIA SUCH A MAJOR PROPAGANDA VICTORY WILL DO GREAT DAMAGE TO THE WEST. MOREOVER SUCH BEHAVIOUR IGNORES ALL POST WAR HISTORY. THAT HISTORY SHOWS THAT WHEN THE WEST DISARMS UNILATERALLY, THE RUSSIANS DO NOT FOLLOW SUIT. INSTEAD OF

DISARMING TOO, THEY SPEED UP THEIR REARMAMENT.

OF COURSE THE FAULT IS NOT ENTIRELY PRESIDENT CARTER'S. MR. CALLAGHAN MUST SHOULDER MUCH OF THE BLAME. FOR MONTHS IT HAS BEEN CLEAR THAT BRITAIN SHOULD HAVE BEEN TAKING THE LEAD IN EUROPE AND TELLING MR. CARTER THAT THE NEUTRON WEAPON WAS NECESSARY FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE WEST. BUT OF COURSE THE CALLAGHAN GOVERNMENT IS INCAPABLE OF TAKING SUCH A LEAD BECAUSE OF ITS EXTREME LEFT WING, AND THEREFORE NOTHING WAS DON

THE POINT ABOUT THE NEUTRON WEAPON IS THAT IT IS THOUSANDS OF TIMES LESS POWERFUL THAN THE SS 20 WHICH IS THE RUSSIAN MOBILE CONTINENTAL MISSILE THAT IS TRAINED ON EVERY EUROPEAN CITY. SECONDLY, IT IS A DEFENSIVE WEAPON, SINCE IT IS DESIGNED TO BREAK UP MASS CONCENTRATIONS OF TANKS. NATIONS WHICH DO NOT HAVE MASSES OF TANKS AND HAVE NO INTENTION OF INVADING OTHER COUNTRIES WITH THEM HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR FROM THE NEUTRON WEAPON. THIRDLY, THE WEAPON DOES MUCH LESS DAMAGE TO INNOCENT CIVILIANS AND TO BUILDINGS THAN OUR PRESENT OLD FASHIONED 'DIRTY' TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

QUITE APART FROM THE ENORMOUS PROPAGANDA VICTORY THA PRESIDENT CARTER AND MR. CALLAGHAN HAVE PRESENTED TO THE RUSSIANS, THE DECISION IS ON ITS MERITS THEREFORE A FOOLISH ONE. A WEAK AND DANGEROUS DECISION HAS BEEN MADE WHICH WILL DO PSYCHOLOGICAL, POLITICAL AND MILITARY DAMAGE TO NATO. END TEXT.
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2. COMMENT: COL. PETER JOYNES, WHO HANDLES DEFENSE MATTERS FOR THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY RESEARCH DEPARTMENT, TOLD POL-MIL ATTACHE THAT GILMOUR WENT "WELL BEYOND HIS BRIEF" IN LANGUAGE HE USED. JOYNES SAID WINSTON CHURCHILL HAD URGED A STRONG LINE BE TAKEN BY ALL CONSERVATIVE PARTY SPOKESMEN ON DEFENSE REGRETTING US DECISION. WHEN ASKED WHETHER GILMOUR HAD CLEARED HIS POSITION WITH MRS. THATCHER, JOYNES SAID HE DID NOT BUT FELT SURE MRS. THATCHER AGREED FULLY WITH THE LINE TAKEN BY GILMOUR WHICH, IN JOYNES' OPINION, REFLECTED FAIRLY THE REACTION OF SHADOW CABINET MEMBERS.

BREWSTER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, SPEECHES, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, NUCLEAR WEAPONS DEPLOYMENT, NUCLEAR WEAPONS PRODUCTION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978LONDON05862
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780163-0724
Format: TEL
From: LONDON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780455/aaaabupe.tel
Line Count: 108
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: ff9f01b0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 LONDON 5616
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2963833
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GILMOUR'S REMARKS ON ERW DECISION
TAGS: MPOL, MNUC, MMOL, UK, US, (CARTER, JIMMY), (GILMOUR, IAN)
To: STATE DOD
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/ff9f01b0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014